

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claims **9** and **22**, AMEND claims **23-24**, **26-27**, and **31** in accordance with the following:

**Listing of the Claims:**

1. (Original) An electrode catalyst, comprising:  
a conductive carrier, and  
a mixture containing a particulate noble metal and at least one particulate rare-earth oxide,  
the mixture being supported on said conductive carrier,  
wherein said particulate rare-earth oxide has an alkaline-earth metal as solid solution therein.
2. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 1, wherein said conductive carrier is a particulate carbon.
3. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 1, wherein said noble metal is silver, platinum, or palladium.
4. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 1, wherein said noble metal is silver.
5. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 1, wherein the molar ratio of said noble metal to said rare-earth oxide is from 1: 0.01 to 1: 4.0.
6. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 1, wherein said rare-earth oxide is cerium oxide.

7. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 1, wherein said alkaline-earth metal is at least one selected from a group consisting of magnesium, calcium, and strontium.

8. (Original) The electrode catalyst according to claim 6, wherein the molar ratio of said cerium oxide to said alkaline-earth metal is from 1: 0.005 to 1: 0.3.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) A gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis, characterized by use of the electrode catalyst according to claim 1.

11. (Previously Presented) An electrode catalyst comprising a conductive carrier, and a mixture containing a particulate noble metal and at least one particulate rare-earth oxide, the mixture being supported on the conductive carrier, wherein the conductive carrier comprises carbon powder.

12. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing a gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis comprising laminating a reaction layer containing the electrode catalyst according to claim 1, a gas diffusion layer containing a conductive carrier, and a collector.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) A method for using the electrode catalyst according to claim 1, characterized in that the electrode catalyst is used as a catalyst component for the reaction layer of a gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis.

15. (Previously Presented) A method for gas diffusion electrode-based brine electrolysis, comprising using the electrode catalyst according to claim 1.

16. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 2, wherein said noble metal is silver, platinum, or palladium.

17. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 16, wherein

said noble metal is silver.

18. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 17, wherein the molar ratio of said noble metal to said rare-earth oxide is from 1: 0.01 to 1: 4.0.

19. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 18, wherein said rare-earth oxide is cerium oxide.

20. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 19, wherein said alkaline-earth metal is at least one selected from a group consisting of magnesium, calcium, and strontium.

21. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst according to claim 20, wherein the molar ratio of said cerium oxide to said alkaline-earth metal is from 1: 0.005 to 1: 0.3.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) A gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis, characterized by use of the electrode catalyst according to claim 21-22.

24. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis comprising laminating a reaction layer containing the electrode catalyst according to claim 21-22, a gas diffusion layer containing a conductive carrier, and a collector.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method for using the electrode catalyst according to claim 21-22, characterized in that the electrode catalyst is used as a catalyst component for the reaction layer of a gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis.

27. (Currently Amended) A method for gas diffusion electrode-based brine electrolysis, comprising using the electrode catalyst according to claim 21-22.

28. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst of claim 11, wherein the

particulate noble metal has a particle diameter of 100nm or less, and wherein the particulate rare-earth oxide has a particle diameter of 500nm or less.

29. (Previously Presented) An electrode catalyst comprising a conductive carrier, and a mixture containing a particulate noble metal and at least one particulate rare-earth oxide, the mixture being supported on the conductive carrier, wherein the particulate noble metal has a particle diameter of 200nm or less, wherein the particulate rare-earth oxide has a particle diameter of 500nm or less, and wherein the conductive carrier comprises carbon powder.

30. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst of claim 11, wherein the mixture is fixed to the conductive carrier.

31. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis, comprising laminating a reaction layer containing an ~~the~~ electrode catalyst ~~comprising a conductive carrier, and a mixture containing a particulate noble metal and at least one particulate rare-earth oxide, the mixture being supported on the conductive carrier,~~ a gas diffusion layer containing a conductive carrier, and a collector, wherein the electrode catalyst comprises a mixture containing a particulate noble metal and at least one particulate rare-earth oxide, and the mixture being supported on the conductive carrier.

32. (Previously Presented) A method for gas diffusion electrode-based brine electrolysis comprising using the electrode catalyst according to claim 11.

33. (Previously Presented) A gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis characterized by the use of the electrode catalyst according to claim 11.

34. (Previously Presented) The electrode catalyst of claim 11, wherein the electrode catalyst is suitable for an oxygen reduction reaction at a cathode in conjunction with a gas diffusion electrode for brine electrolysis.

35. (Previously Presented) A gas diffusion electrode prepared by the process of claim 31.

36. (Previously Presented) A method for gas diffusion electrode-based brine electrolysis comprising using the electrode prepared by the process of claim 31.

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